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A DAY IN ELSINORE.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

THE chance of travelling in Denmark in a train called 'express' was of itself alone almost enough to tempt me to take the run from Copenhagen to Elsinore. Nothing more terrible as a trial of patience can be imagined for an impetuous man than a long course of railway journeys in Scandinavia. It is much the same in Sweden and Denmark in this respect. If you fail to get into an express train—and there are very few of these—you may spend a whole day in covering less than a hundred dreary miles.

Besides, in my case it was winter. It is all very well in the bright northern summer to have from ten to twenty minutes to loiter at each little railway station. In winter, however, when you may have thirty or forty degrees of frost in the outer air, the constant going and coming of travellers keeps you in a perpetual state of discomfort, and you have no inducement to stretch your legs in these little wayside stations, which have nothing for you except a dull series of advertisements and a succession of keen draughts.

The distance to Elsinore is rather under forty miles. To cover this in a little over an hour is afeat of which the Danish State officials are reasonably proud. In Denmark the bulls of the railways are in the hands of the Government. This has its advantages as well as its disadvantages. A Government is bound, for example, to care for its subjects. Therefore, perhaps, it is that slow but sure travelling is one of the features of Danish railway locomotion, even as also the carriages are in winter kept excellently warmed. On the other hand, the fruits of enterprising competition between rival railway companies are not obtained. As a further comment upon the State influence here, it may be mentioned that the more important trains carry electric light, in the blessing of which even the lowest class of travellers participate.

Elsinore is famous for two or three characteristics. I suppose most of us on this side of the

German Ocean are still fanciful enough to think of it chiefly in connection with Hamlet and his father's ghost. Until about a generation ago, to merchant shippers it was a subject of execration because of the Sound dues, which were here collected. Both these elements of interest may, however, be dismissed from the mind nowadays. To the ordinary person, whether a business man or a seeker after the picturesque, the town appeals most as the ferry port betwixt Denmark and Sweden. There is here only some two and a quarter miles of waterway in the Sound. A man must try very hard if he is to be sea-sick in so brief a crossing, especially with so much beauty and animation around him: the gay villas of Helsingborg on the Swedish side, with their wooded knolls; Kronborg's noble castle by Elsinore; the long line of Danish pleasure resorts north and south; and the myriad of craft of all kinds—from one tonners to five thousand tonners—which adorn the blue waters far as the eye can see up and down the Sound.

As it was winter, however, with the thermometers of Copenhagen sticking at zero, I scarcely expected a surfeit of the beautiful either *en route* or at Elsinore itself. An unkind gray fog hung over the capital when we left it; the same mantle stayed low upon the snow-bound landscape on either hand of us. From out of it, once or twice, several blotches of black stood strongly, telling of the forests around the summer palaces of Denmark's king. But there was too much rime on the window of the car to allow more than a dim glance at these. I had as companion a stout, good-natured man, who entertained me with English conversation. He had been cut to pieces by a railway train years back during a holiday in which he had come from America to his homeland; and, thanks to his amazing constitution and the doctors, his trunk had survived the shock. I did not at first notice how he was mutilated, he looked so hale in the face. He was extremely anxious to be agreeable, poor fellow, and succeeded entirely. 'Now, what,' he asked, after telling about his accident, 'would

you have done if you had been me? Would you have stayed in Denmark or gone back to America? It was an odd question, since I knew nothing of his circumstances. But on general grounds it seemed to me that for the battle of life in the States at least a pair of hands and legs are necessary; and so I commended him for his own determination. The commendation pleased him.

Near Elsinore, the train hugs the sea-shore; but on this day you would never have dreamed you were by ocean's flowing tide. In fact, there was no water to be seen. All was frozen fast, and buried beneath six or seven inches of new-fallen snow. The fog cut short the horizon even as it severed it in the west. There was but a white level skirting for the mind to toy with. Here and there men were to be seen fishing. They had dug themselves holes in the ice, and tried for their prey with nets and long-handled tridents. Snow-bound villas with fantastic eaves and gables rose at intervals in the haze, compelled admiration, and were lost to sight. And so at length we sped into Elsinore station, which my companion described, and I think justly, as 'the most beautiful in the world.'

Here the ferry-boat was at hand, ready to plough its way through the ice-floes to Sweden. A bevy of travellers in furs boarded it; and a bevy of disestablished watermen, fisher-folk, and others stood by with blue noses to watch its interesting exodus. For my part, I was not for Sweden to-day. When I had watched the boat begin its crunching against the blue bergs, I put my hands deep in my pocket and went away to see what I could of Elsinore.

The town is a neat little place of about nine thousand inhabitants, and shows very scanty traces of the antiquity it may claim to have. Its streets are cobbled and flagged, and its houses mainly of wood, with a certain irregularity of style, though similarity of windowed gables, which has a pleasing effect. The Elsinore children were sliding their way to school with reckless swing of their book-bags and with very rosy cheeks. Save for the children, Elsinore's streets slept tranquilly under the snow which covered them. I soon came to an amiable signpost which told me just what I wished to know. It bore two black, weathered arms. Upon the one was the word 'Kronborg'; and upon the other was written 'Marienlyst.' Thanks to the fog, the Kronborg arm seemed a mere delusion. For whither it pointed could be seen nothing but a fuming and stinking factory of gas and storeyard of coal. Instead of the gracious pinnacles and embellished gables of the medieval castle, there were chimney shafts, grimed walls, and doors inscribed, 'No admittance except on business.' From one of these last, a trio of black-faced operatives emerged into the purer outer fog as I passed the place.

For the present, however, I left Kronborg to itself. I was for Marienlyst, that sweet strand of villas bowered amid trees, of green meadows bordering the yellow sands laved by the blue sea, with its bosky ridge binding it close on the west, as if to keep the pure air of the ocean diffused through it. The snow was quite tiresome. It must have been a foot deep when I had left the last house of the suburbs behind me. They had gazed at me somewhat inquisitively

from these snug little white houses, as I plodded past their double windows.

Marienlyst was in white mourning. Its houses on the edge of the sand and its radiant crimson and yellow villas were thick in snow and desolate as the Pyramids at midnight. No cheerful threads of azure smoke were visible above the chimney-pots. The very entrances were flanked high with drifts of snow, and icicles of appalling magnitude hung from the gutters of the roofs like portcullises. A belated bird squeaked rather than twittered as it flew over my head; and the thin wail of the telegraph wire was heard through the fog. I saw no one in front; and now that I had gone from Elsinore, I could see no one behind. The white statues in the gardens of the Bath Hotel—empty as a soap-bubble—looked altogether miserable. Can you imagine anything more distressing to a sympathetic person than the discovery of groups of Graces, Venuses, and the like, unclothed, in the open, with snow to their knees and thirty degrees of frost pinching their woe-begone faces?

But I had not come to Marienlyst to see empty houses or the martyrdom of marble ancients. Like the rest of my countrymen, I yearned to see where Hamlet, that wondrous madman, lies interred. For the moment I was content to laugh anachronisms to scorn. Faith should overcome them, as it has overcome so many tougher obstacles. Much, indeed, should I have to reproach myself with, if, being at Elsinore, I failed—no matter what the season—to commune with this brilliant young Dane's disembodied spirit in echoing its own corporeal utterance so many centuries ago, 'To be or not to be,' &c.

I had no very exact idea where to look for the sepulchre. Chance came to my aid. I plunged into one drift worse than the rest, and in scrambling from it saw a mound beyond, overshadowed by trees. A monolith, small and smoothly chiselled, topped the mound. It was as I guessed. This pretty little pile of rockery, a few feet high, covered Hamlet's dust—the trivial remains of the inspirer of an inspired man. Upon the monolith may be read the convincing words, 'Hamlets Grav.' I hope my readers will not misunderstand me, that they will, in short, see that 'My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites.' I could not possibly, though I had strained my hypocrisy to the bursting-point, have shed the tear of sensibility here, so persuaded was I of the unauthenticity of the tombstone. Nevertheless, I was not wholly unmoved. The fancy has its own empire.

Subsequently, I bought a photograph of the grave in a shop in Elsinore. I asked the young woman who sold it to me if she had any doubt of the truth of the thing. 'Was it really Hamlet's grave?' She seemed shocked that I could even hint at scepticism on such a subject, and would have put the photograph aside for a more worthy purchaser, had I not interfered. As if to overwhelm me with evidence, and the more to pique my unbelieving nature, she would fain also have found for me a picture of the brook in which poor Ophelia drowned herself. It was somewhere in the shop, she was sure. I urged her to seek for it; but she sought in vain. 'It is a very little river, sir' she said, as if to excuse herself for being unable to discover its photograph. I am sorry, truly sorry, I cannot put

poor Ophelia's brook in my album of curiosities side by side with Hamlet's tombstone.

Satisfied with my experiences in Marienlyst, I returned to Elsinore. At the byroad I deviated to Kronborg. The fog still held; but there were scarlet-coated soldiers on the track, and following them as torches, I soon came to the broad moat and drawbridge of the castle. A couple of warriors were in the ditch sweeping a convenient area on its ice for the exercise of the officers and their ladies. Above them loomed the nearer of Kronborg's pinnacles. The castle is a showplace in summer. There is a tariff for admission, which includes an ascent to the telegraph tower, the highest point of the old fortress. The girl who took me in hand, however, positively declined this latter adventure. If I would wait for her father—the orthodox cicerone—it might be compassed. Even then, it seemed a freak of folly in mid-January. But when the man came he showed more regard for a traveller's enthusiasm. Without ado we crossed the courtyard of the castle, its snow studded gaily with knots of gossiping soldiers, and straightway attacked the steps. But of course there was very little to repay us for our toil. The snow on the turret roof was a fathom deep and soft as pepper. The wind howled over the exposed summit. And there was nothing to be seen from it except the castle courtyard much foreshortened, and the piled sand on the seaward side of the castle, with the pallid mist wrapping sand and the frozen Sound with chill impartiality.

The chapel of Kronborg was much more cheerful to behold. Its woodwork pulpit, pews, organ, and royal 'box'—if I may call this so—of minute carving and brilliant colouring, with a predominance of scarlet, gladden the eyes. It is small but dainty. My guide bestowed a string of eulogistic adjectives upon it, and really quite half of them were not much out of place.

There are also pictures in Kronborg—a double suite of low rooms full of them. The pictures are poor things, even the historical ones scarcely sufficiently well done to allow the mind to appreciate them for the drama in them, quite apart from their demerits of workmanship.

Two features only stay in the mind as strong reminiscences of Kronborg. The one is the small octagonal chamber always associated with Caroline Matilda, Christian VII.'s divorced queen, and our George III.'s sister. If she had a soul much alive to the attraction of marine prospects, this room must have given her pleasure at times. Its outlook over the Sound and Sweden is admirable in fair weather. But on this day it sounded grim to hear that the poor lady occupied such an apartment. As well might a man be congratulated on inhabiting a cage suspended from London Bridge during a week of persistent fog. A little after we had viewed this chamber, the guide brought me level with a kind of terrace, on the eastern side of the castle, with banks of dingy sand pressing it, the sand set with trivial guns, pointed seaward. Here the gentleman struck an attitude, and with a flourish of hand that would not have discredited a real life 'cicerone' of Italy, remarked: 'This is where the spirit appeared—Hamlet's father's spectre, the royal ghost! This is the terrace it haunted, and here were the soldiers when it appeared to them.'

The announcement did not come unexpected. Still, I could not welcome it seriously. There was less here to send it home to the mind than I had found by Hamlet's grave. I suppose, however, one must treat most legends with a certain mercy. I did not therefore attempt to cross-examine my guide, but received his statements reverentially, as I gazed at the snow-clad terrace and the forbidding sand with its artillery.

Such are the attractions of Kronborg, which has now fallen from its high estate as a guardian of the Baltic, to become a mere barrack!

The short January day had already begun to wane when I had done with the castle. I returned, therefore, to the railway station, dined in view of the score or two of fast-frozen steam-boats and barques in the port, smoked my cigar, and prepared for the evening express back to Copenhagen. My friend of the morning did no more than justice to Elsinore's railway station in talking of its beauty. It is a gem of a railway station—in style more nearly Elizabethan than aught else, though in Denmark they would call it Christian the Fourthian, since that monarch in the sixteenth century introduced it so largely throughout his realm. Externally, it is of red brick and white stone, having a staircase gable in the middle of its facade, flanked by a square tower, capped by a pinnacle on either side. Within, it is altogether pleasing, with its red brick walls, pale-blue iron girders, whence depend electric lamps shaped like ostrich eggs. Its very advertisements are artistically arranged, and none are aggressively prominent. The officials are in keeping with their chaste surroundings: comely men with the courtesy of aristocrats.

I ought to grieve to confess it, but really Elsinore's railway station stays in my mind as the most engaging thing in the district. It is a model. One cannot help being utilitarian. Hence I feel no shame in avowing that all Elsinore's traditions about the royal Hamlet are of weak interest compared to this excellent achievement. The architect's name deserves to go down to posterity.

P O M O N A.*

CHAPTER XII.

You love: no higher shall you go,
For this is true as Gospel text;
Not noble *then* is never so,
Either in this world or the next.

TENNYSON.

WHAT a curiously constituted thing the human heart is! It is no wonder so many novels and love-stories are written, for the variety of effect produced on the puppets when love pulls the strings is infinite, and there is no calculating beforehand what will happen; it can never be reduced to an exact science or argued about; the same causes produce directly contrary effects, and the unexpected is generally what happens, though not invariably so; so we may not even reckon on that.

There is, however, one thing that I think is generally the case, and that is, that anything like opposition strengthens the feeling of love—indeed,

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may sometimes be said to create it. Perhaps this was the case with Maurice Moore. I cannot help feeling that if he had not hastened his departure from Scar in consequence of Owen Ludlow's representations—if Owen Ludlow had held his tongue even at the risk of that last remaining day, allowing opportunities for yet more tender tête-à-têtes, or farewell words, Maurice Moore would have gone away and forgotten all about Sage. I even go further, and think that if he had not had to get up so very early to catch the up-train—if the morning had not been wet and the walk into Shingle muddy and uncomfortable—if his portmanteau even had arrived, as it should, the same evening, instead of visiting about at various stations on the way up, and only reaching its destination at the end of three days, thereby causing much discomfort and irritation to its possessor, if none of these *contre-temps* had happened, he might not have remembered her so constantly. But he felt that he was enduring a good deal for her sake, beginning with his old friend Ludlow rounding on him, and not, he maintained, doing him justice; and this sense of injury rankled, and naturally kept him in mind of the cause of it.

And then, when he got back to Edelstadt, he found the society there uncongenial. The reigning beauty at the Embassy at the time was a girl who had 'a tongue with a tang' to it; and Maurice got into her bad books, and she used her sharp weapon unmercifully on him. She was a good deal cleverer than he was, and she made him look ridiculous before other men, and that is a thing hard to forgive. And there was a new *attaché*, whom the beauty greatly affected, and who was well off, and had expectations in the future, and a possible title; and on every occasion, this 'conceited puppy'—as Maurice, perhaps unjustly, entitled him—was preferred to Maurice, and brought very much to the fore.

At another time, Maurice might have been amused at this petty warfare, and have taken up the cudgels, and paid his enemy back in her own coin; but he had no one to back him up, and laugh over the joke of it with; for one of his special friends out there had gone to India, and another was in very low-water, and too much taken up with his own troubles to enter into other people's jokes. And it is almost impossible to go on feeling amusement at a joke, especially one with a sting in it, unless you have some one to participate in the fun.

And then, too, he was not very well; and it is humiliating to realise how much this may have to do with emotions of the heart. I am afraid sometimes that a blue pill may have a very beneficial effect on a broken heart, and a tonic prevent the worm in the bud from preying on the damask cheek. Anyhow, circumstances within and without him combined to give Maurice a disgust of his present life, of the empty round of inane society, and of the conventional girls he met there, whom he had found tolerable enough before they had begun to worship the rising sun,

and of the empty-headed men who had not two ideas to rub one against another.

So, naturally, his mind reverted to the little, fair girl at Scar, who never said a sharp, cutting word, though it was not for want of brains; for she had twice as much in her as that sneering Miss St Clair, 'who thinks herself so mighty clever.' Sage was not one of those conventional dressed-up dolls of whom you could calculate to a nicety beforehand what she would say on any subject. Sage's conversation was full of simple little surprises, always pleasant ones too; her opinions were not second-hand; they might be often girlish and illogical, but they had a quaint originality about them, and at any rate were real, and not merely for effect.

Owen Ludlow thought so much of her, too. Maurice felt that since that last evening at Scar, his old friend was not quite the same to him; he fancied his letters were cooler in tone and less frequent; and there was never a word about the Merridews, though Maurice felt sure the friendship had not collapsed when Sage left Scar. He amused himself one evening, when he was more than usually out of tune with his surroundings, by imagining what Owen Ludlow would say, if, for love of Sage, he, Maurice, gave up his prospects, which, all said and done, were not so very brilliant, and settled down in some humbler sphere of life, into some government office or bank, or something of that sort, and had a little house in some pretty, unfashionable suburb, where Sage should be surrounded with everything pretty and tasteful, and be perfectly happy. Of that last part of the story he had no doubt at all, conceited fellow!

And after that first indulgence in such a day-dream, he often reverted to it, and filled in details and imagined incidents, till, by Christmas, it had assumed such solid proportions, that when the chance of a few days' leave turned up unexpectedly, it seemed the most natural thing in the world to go right off and find Sage, and lay the matter before her, and to tell Owen Ludlow his plans, and ask his assistance in carrying them out.

His own people up in Yorkshire would no doubt make a bother; but that could not be helped; he was man enough to settle his own affairs, and to know what was best for him; and by this time he was entirely convinced that Sage was the best for him; and he was quite sure that Owen Ludlow would say the same.

His programme was to go straight down to Scar and talk the matter over with Ludlow, and find out from him where Sage lived. But he was saved this long fruitless journey into Dorsetshire by asking at Ludlow's club, where he was told that the painter was in London; and he made his way instead to Regent's Park; and Ludlow found him established there when he reached home after his visit to the Merridews on Christmas Eve.

It cannot be said that at first Ludlow's greeting to his young friend was particularly hearty; but after that prolonged sitting, which lasted far into Christmas morning, Ludlow had been talked into perfect sympathy with Maurice, into romantic enthusiasm which exceeded even Maurice's, into belief in love in a cottage and simple happiness worthy of a girl in her teens, into utter

POMONA.

oblivion of worldly wisdom and hard common-sense, into building castles in the air of an elaborate style of architecture rarely attempted except in extreme youth. He went to bed at last in quite a whirl of pleasant anticipations ; it was so delightful to think of the happiness this would bring to his little friend. He had accused himself so often of having been inadvertently the cause of spoiling her life, that it was an infinite satisfaction to have some hand in glorifying it.

The sense of having regained Owen Ludlow's good opinion had a very fortifying effect on Maurice's resolutions, and everything combined to make him well content with the turn affairs were taking. There was something quite providential, Sage felt, in the unusually favourable aspect under which the little house at Dalston first presented itself to Maurice Moore, if it were not profane to attribute such small matters to Providence. First of all, there had been a fall of snow the very morning after Christmas-day, and all the street and houses were clothed in white, which had not yet had time to become smutty. Then Sarah opened the door in a tidy black dress, not gaping at the seams, and disclosing mysterious under garments ; and, moreover, she had on a spotless cap and apron, an event almost unparalleled in the domestic history of the family. And Sage, as she gazed shyly at herself in the little looking-glass, was not displeased at what she saw, and was glad her serge dress fitted so well and was nicely made ; though at the time of its construction she had had a dreary, little feeling in her heart that it did not matter and nobody cared. But even if she had never seen Maurice again, I do not think she would ever have really felt that it did not matter how she looked ; there was always the feeling that the girl he had liked, even a little, ought to look her best.

And it all went so pleasantly, and father was so nice—there never was so nice and kind a father. He took Maurice off into the surgery, where they had a long talk ; and when they came in, he was seized with a sudden and, as it seemed to the boys, unseasonable desire to hang the picture of Kitty in his bedroom, an operation which of course required the assistance of the boys and Kitty, and apparently took wonderfully long time. Kitty described to Sage afterwards how father kept changing his mind as to where the picture should hang and would look best. 'And would you believe it, Sage—Nigel drove in six nails ; and after all, father decided on the very first place we put it in, opposite the window. And told him ever so many times that he ought to come down and talk to Mr Moore, and that I knew you would be awfully angry at being left all alone with him such a long time.'

Was it a long time ? Sage wondered. And then they had tea ; and then Maurice carried them all off except the doctor, for Owen Ludlow had by some happy accident got a box at Drury Lane for the pantomime, which seemed to the children almost incredible bliss.

It was such exquisite pleasure to have her cloak wrapped round her, and to be taken care of, and no rude crushing allowed to come near her, she who had pushed her way hitherto, and taken rubs and elbowings as a matter of course ; and to feel

his hand seek hers, and to hear his voice sink to a tender tone that made the most commonplace remarks sound like poetry ; and for Owen Ludlow to take it for granted that Maurice should monopolise her and take care of her ; and that she should linger on their return just for a minute to say good-night at the door, while the children rushed in to describe to father all the glories of the pantomime, Dennis and Nigel being anxious to illustrate some of the practical jokes played by the clown on the pantaloon, but neither of them being willing to enact the pantaloon's part.

Sage was obliged to tell Kitty something about her happiness, when she went up to bed, finding Kitty wide awake with the excitement of the theatre. It seemed as if she must impart some of her great joy to some one of the womankind, though it was only a child who could not understand a tenth part of all it meant to her. But to kneel by Kitty's bed with the child's warm arms round her neck, and sob for very happiness, seemed to relieve the heart that was full to bursting with happy love. It seemed next best to laying her head in mother's lap, that dead mother, whom she sometimes conjured up to love and sympathise with her in trouble or joy.

Next day was quite as perfect ; for Owen Ludlow had arranged a grand shopping expedition to get Christmas presents ; and 'poor Sage,' as Kitty described it, 'was left behind in the studio, and did not go to any of the lovely shops and bazaars ; and Mr Ludlow did not buy any present for her. Mr Moore stayed with her ; so perhaps she did not mind,' Kitty added doubtfully, with a remembrance of Sage's confidences the night before, which were somehow mixed up with harlequin and columbine's adventures.

Mind ? It was only too delightful to sit over the studio fire and hear all that was to be in that bright future, painted by Maurice in such glowing colours.

It was his last day ; and he would have to return to Edelstadt to-morrow ; but the parting would not be for long, he told her. Ludlow was going to make all sorts of inquiries after the employment that was to provide ways and means for that jolly, little house.

'Good old Ludlow is as keen after it as I am, pretty near, and he won't leave a stone unturned. He knows heaps of fellows, you know, and has a lot of interest of an odd, out-of-the-way sort. We must have a room for Ludlow—mustn't we, Sage?—whenever he likes to come up to London. I wish I hadn't to go back at all. I wish I could stop here with my little sweetheart ; but I may get a chance of running over again before long ; but it won't do to be extravagant, eh, Sage ? I shall turn over every sixpence now. Ludlow has been reading me a fine lecture on economy ; and he's quite right ; and I mean to be as close-fisted as anything.—And look how I have begun ! I haven't even got a ring for my little lady-love. Just think of that ! Every ploughboy gives his sweetheart a ring nowadays ; and I have none for mine. But when I come home I shall bring one. Even if I don't come before, I must come for the private view. I must be among the first to see my little girl's picture in the Academy. Isn't it queer that we should be in one picture before we ever met, just you and me, Sage, with little Kitty to play propriety.'

'And Pomona, Maurice.' Her voice would not keep quite steady yet to say his name.

'Oh, Pomona does not count; she is merely imaginary. Of course, I know it is Ludlow's remembrance of his wife; but I often wonder if it is really a bit like her, whether he has not idealised her out of all reality? And I also wonder, sometimes, looking at it—I have been looking at it a good deal to-day, Sage, not so much, I must confess, at the central figure, but at that right-hand corner where there is something far more interesting—but I wonder sometimes, looking at Pomona, whether in real life one could call her pretty at all, though she looks pretty enough in the picture.—But don't tell Ludlow what I say, for he would regard it as rank heresy.'

'You will not go away without saying good-bye this time, Maurice?'

And then she had to tell him all she felt and suffered that day at Scar; and he pitied and comforted her, and blamed himself, and, in self-excuse, told her all he had gone through, and the dreary start from Scar in the wet and misty morning, and how he had looked up at the window with a drawn blind opposite the 'Black Dog.'

And next day came the parting, and father—that good father, who really felt a little hurt and injured at the entire desertion of him by his former devoted admirer and slave, yet managed to give her twenty minutes alone with Maurice to get through the sweetly painful operation of saying good-bye.

'All my patients will be poisoned in consequence,' he complained; 'for I let Nigel and Dennis make up pills; and when my back was turned, preventing Will and Kitty from demolishing all my lozenges, they put in all sorts of drugs they had no business to. Well, it will be on your head if any mischief comes of it.—Bless you, little Sage!' And he took the little fair head on which the blame was to fall, between his hands and kissed it.

GALL-FLIES AND THEIR WORK.

THE drop of ink which flows from my pen as I write these words is intimately connected with the insects about which I am going to make a few remarks. For to certain of their kind we owe the gall-nuts which form so important an ingredient in its manufacture. Gall-producing insects belong to two different orders. The first, along with bees, wasps, and ants, come under the Hymenoptera; the others, along with the flies, are known as Diptera.

It is their remarkable power of modifying plants to suit their own ends which renders them of special interest. One of them alights on a tree, inserts its ovipositor, and lays its egg in the puncture. Thereupon, the vital energy of the plant is directed to that spot, and throws up around the egg a mass of nutritive tissue. This tissue serves at once as the cradle and food-supply of the grub which is presently hatched, and which remains there until it emerges a perfect insect.

Man, in order to coax the vegetable kingdom to supply his needs, has had to select and cultivate laboriously for many generations: the gall-fly with a touch, so to speak, of its ovipositor calls

forth the required result at once. Had it appeared at the wave of the magician's wand, it would scarcely have appeared more wonderful.

One of the most remarkable facts in the history of the gall-fly is, that different species acting on the same tree produce totally different results. Thus, one of them puncturing the wild rose gives rise to one of those pretty moss-like tufts which so frequently adorn it. Another on the same plant produces round growths resembling currants in size and form. A much greater variety of form is produced on the oak-tree. No fewer than fifty species of gall-fly, indeed, are said to produce their particular forms of growth upon it. One of the most common is that which produces the marble gall. This gall is produced on the twigs in the form of round bodies, soft and green at first, afterwards brown and woody. The familiar oak-apple is of more irregular shape, and prettily coloured red and yellow like a fruit. Of a similar shape to the marble gall, but softer, and of a pretty red colour where exposed to the sun, is the cherry gall. Another fruit-like gall, small, round, and often appearing in clusters on the male catkins of the oak, is known as the currant gall. Still more remarkable, perhaps, is the artichoke gall. In this case the gall-fly has laid its egg in the centre of a bud, and the vegetative growth, though disturbed, has asserted itself in a symmetrical manner. The oval body in the centre, containing the egg or grub, is covered with a series of imbricating or overlapping scales, so that the whole bears a striking resemblance to the involucrum of a thistle.

Of quite another class are a number of small galls which appear studding the leaves in considerable numbers, and are known as 'spangles.' They occur in the form of little disc-like bodies, each attached to the under side of the leaf by a tiny stalk. These spangles are of different shapes according to the different species of fly forming them.

The cause of this variety in the vegetative response to what seem to us such similar stimuli, is somewhat of a mystery. When it has been said that differences in the shape of the original wound, in that of the egg and grub, in the nature of the irritant fluid injected with the egg, in the position of the wound on the tree, probably all contribute, there is perhaps nothing more to add. Or we may shelter our ignorance by speaking of the influence of the vital force of the egg. And what makes the thing more remarkable still is the fact that other insects can puncture the leaves of plants and lay their eggs without causing any abnormal vegetable growth. This is the case, for example, with the whole class of leaf-miners.

The oak responds with overflowing generosity to the appeal made to it by the gall-fly, and provides nourishment far in excess of the wants of its guest; and so it happens that the cradle and larder of one particular gall-fly are made use of by others. We have here one example among many of the curious mixture of reckless extravagance and strict economy to be found in nature. Flitting about among the branches of the oak-tree are countless myriads of flies on maternal thoughts intent, which have nevertheless no power of inducing the oak to provide galls for them. But here are the marble galls produced by another species forming a ready-made supply

of nourishment of the right sort. Piercing the excrescences with their ovipositors, they deposit therein their eggs and depart. The young are hatched, and feed on the substance of the gall without damage to the rightful owner—there is food sufficient and to spare for all. The rightful owner is indeed fortunate if nothing further happens to him than this feeding on his preserves without doing him bodily injury or starving him. For there are other and more dangerous flies flitting about the oak-tree. Glittering in green and gold array, and armed with long ovipositors, they also are looking out for places to deposit their eggs; and the only place that will do is the body of the fat grub lying in the centre of the marble gall. Hence it is woe to the original possessor when one of these gay hoverers chooses its gall. With its long ovipositor, the fly pierces the gall, and places its egg *within* the body of the grub inside. An exceedingly common tragedy in nature is played out within the narrow stage of the oak-gall. The second comers to the gall—the harmless ones—are likewise subject to their own proper parasites, and may be made the unwilling receptacles of their eggs. And then the nutritious mass of the gall proves acceptable to caterpillars of various small moths, while beetles, bees, and wasps may avail themselves of it as a shelter. Thus many species of insects may be found in an old oak gall. An enthusiastic naturalist once counted the different species in one of them, and they amounted to forty-three! These included six species of small moths, seven beetles, and the rest saw-flies, gall-flies, ichneumon flies, mason wasps, bees, &c.

The marble gall is properly inhabited, as we have seen, by a single grub; but the fly which causes the growth of the oak-apple lays several eggs. These are contained in a group of hard woody cells near the centre of the gall, the rest of which is soft. The soft part is frequently eaten by insects, or torn away by birds in search of the grubs; and the hard cells remain on the tree, where, along with the hard brown marble galls, they may be seen during the winter months.

The life-history of the insects inhabiting the spangles on the oak-tree leaves is of peculiar interest. It furnishes us with an example of what is known to naturalists as alternation of generations, and of parthenogenesis. Two distinct forms of gall-fly were formerly described as different species—they were even placed in different genera. One of them is found inhabiting the currant galls, and the other in one form of the spangles. Some fifteen years ago it was shown by Dr Adler that they were two different stages of the same species of gall-fly; and the discovery has since been confirmed by others. These two forms, so distinct as to be ascribed by naturalists to different genera, proceed the one from the other by direct generation: the children are totally different from their parents, but the grandchildren resemble them. This is termed alternation of generations. In May a little gall-fly lays its eggs on the leaves or male catkins of the oak, and the currant gall is produced. Development is rapid; and from this gall issue male and female flies. After mating, the females pierce the oak-leaves and lay their eggs. But

instead of a second crop of currant galls, there appear spangles. This takes place in the autumn. After a while the spangles become detached from the leaves and fall to the ground; there they swell, and the further development of the larva takes place. In the spring, there issues a fly perfectly distinct from the one which laid the eggs on the leaf and produced the spangles; and, strange to say, they are all females: no males appear among them. Yet these females puncture the oak-tree, and lay their eggs to produce another crop of currant galls, as their grandparents did, but not their parents, which produced spangles. From these currant galls issue male and female flies as before.

Other trees and plants are liable to the attacks of gall-flies. In late summer and autumn, the willow bushes are often seen covered with pretty red fruit-like bodies adhering to the backs of the leaves. These are also galls. Less symmetrical and beautiful are the effects of gall-flies on more lowly plants like wild thyme and speedwell, on which they take the form of irregular swellings and distortions of the stems and leaves. Probably, indeed, the possession of a peculiar gall fly or flies is the rule rather than the exception among plants.

The influence of man on vegetation has been deep and far-reaching: nature has responsively ministered liberally to his needs and his sense of beauty. Yet the wild rose, yielding to his prolonged efforts the 'Gloire de Dijon' and the 'Baroness Rothschild,' is less of a wonder than the same bush bursting out into mossy tufts and round berries under the influence of insects; the Chinese oak, a hundred years old, growing in a small pot, has less of the marvellous than that one in the hedgerow responding to the punctures of thousands of its tiny guests, and covering itself with oak-apples, marble galls, spangles, &c., to supply them with food.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XLII.—DISSOLVING VIEWS.

THUS Isabel stepped from her proud position as the courted heiress, and divested herself of her 'gold and jewels,' her 'silver and pearls.' When her aunt took her departure for Lancashire—Mr Suffield having still to remain in town for a day or two—Isabel met her at the station with a small box, which she enjoined her aunt to take great care of and not to open till she was in her own North. That box contained the jewellery of rare foreign workmanship which Uncle Harry had left: so resolved was she to be rid of all she could be rid of that had belonged to Uncle Harry. She tried to be rid also of the furniture and other things that had been bought with Uncle Harry's money; but Ainsworth had thought it was a pity that her pretty home should be broken up, and he had suggested a compromise. He had gone to Mr Suffield and proposed himself to pay for the things. But Suffield had been so angry at the suggestion, and had so obstinately declared that if he heard any

more of it he would have nothing to do with the money at all, that the matter was allowed to drop. Then Isabel sweetly asked Ainsworth why the flat should be given up: would it not do as a dwelling for both of them?

'And then,' said she, 'then I shall feel as if I had brought you something—a very little something!—besides myself and the cares I took upon myself.'

And then Ainsworth, greatly daring, asked, since the dwelling was ready and since she was now—or soon would be—a mere spinster without an income, why they should not prepare to join hands and purses as soon as possible?

So it came to pass that an early day in spring was fixed for their wedding. Isabel went to see her father with the uncertain design of asking him to perform the usual office of a father on such an occasion, and 'give her away'; but his sequestered life on the Surrey hills seemed so serene, he was so occupied with his 'Defence of Transcendentalism,' and he showed so remote an interest in what she told him of herself, that she thought it was a pity to disturb his equable leisure.

'I am delighted to hear it, my child,' said he. 'Marriage, with love, is the completing of a woman; so she fulfils the law of her being. You should read Luther on marriage, my dear. He has given the most beautiful picture of the nature and ends and duties of the wedded life you are ever likely to read.'

That was all he said; and so he turned again to his 'Defence of Transcendentalism.' Isabel, therefore, turned to her uncle: who but he—the kind and indulgent nourisher of her youth and friend of her maturer years—her all but father—should give her away? He was asked, and at once agreed, to perform the paternal office; and so Isabel went down to Lancashire to fulfil the time before her wedding, for she desired to be married from her uncle's house.

Meanwhile Mr Suffield had been getting through the business for which he stayed behind in London. He had arranged with the whip of his party to pair for the session and then to resign his seat. One important division he could not be paired for, and he remained a day or two longer than he had intended, to perform his duty to his party. There was another debate on Indian affairs—it concerned Opium this time—and his secretary, the Tame Philosopher, had prevailed on him to make a speech. He had written for him a most learned discourse, packed with words of the peculiarly Tame-Philosophic kind. Suffield sat down for a little in the Library of the House of Commons and wrinkled his brows over the sheets, but his thoughts would wander after his family and his affairs into Lancashire.

'I can make nought o' this!' he said, and rose, folding the sheets away in his pocket.

He went down into the House, and promising himself that he would not miss the night-train home, he sat and listened in a half-dazed condition to the droning and the buzzing, and grew weary of it all. One of the whips of his party came to him and asked him if he meant to carry out the desire he had expressed to speak on the question.

'Nay,' said he; 'I ha' nought to say. But I'll vote.'

Still he sat, and still the debate drawled andumbled on—with an occasional screech or two—till eleven o'clock struck. There was no sign that the division was at hand; and he went to the whip and begged that he might be paired for the division, because he must hurry down to Lancashire on business. The whip looked coldly on him, but acceded to his request; and Suffield walked out of the House never to enter it again.

In the lobby he encountered the Tame Philosopher, hanging about in expectation of hearing his own rhapsodical and bombastical periods delivered by his patron.

'You are not going away!' he exclaimed in dismay.

'I am,' answered Suffield, cramming his oration into his hands. 'Thou'rt th' only man that can fitly deliver that fine composition. Keep it, my friend. This question, if I'm not mistaken, 'll come up again, and then thou mayst be in th' House thyself, and canst deliver it!'

He drove away to the station—he had brought his travelling bag to the House—and caught his train to the North. He entered a sleeping-carriage, and quickly put himself to bed. And as the train rolled away through the soft night, charged with premonitory whiffs and whispers of spring, the unbidden refrain kept rolling through and through his mind :

O the oak, and the ash, and the bonny birken tree,
They're all growing green in my ain countree.

And at length he went to sleep, to awake in his own Lancashire.

And so the interest of our story fades from London; for the Tame Philosopher soon followed his patron back to the North—he could not live, he declared, 'without the solace of seeing my dear George Suffield, a true man's-a-man-for-a' that'—and Doughty's existence was regularly merged now in Ainsworth's, the interest of whose life was now in Lancashire. Gorgonio was heard of no more; and as for Tanderjee and the blameless Daniel they had fitting punishments meted out to them at the Lancashire spring assizes for felony and for obtaining money on false pretences.

But before we say adieu to the excellent family that has largely figured in this story, let us see how they were affected by the revolution in their circumstances. They dwelt no longer in the noble old Holdsworth Hall: that had been let to a Dutch-German-French Jew who gambled successfully on the Stock Exchange. They lived in a modest, old-fashioned house on the border of the village which Suffield had built, George having rooms of his own in town, to be always in supervision of the City part of the business.

Isabel—who lived in her uncle's house till her marriage—could not but note with delight how he and her aunt renewed their youth. Both might have been held somewhat excused if they had expressed or shown regret for their lost wealth and position, and resentment against the necessity for returning to work, when they had thought that work was over, according to the doleful habit of people who have been 'reduced'; but neither of them behaved as the foolish people behave. They were busy, cheery, and harmonious by day, and by night they were wrapped

in the peaceful and profound sleep of the just and merciful. Suffield was up and into the works as early in the morning as his work-people ; and Mrs Suffield was up not much later, and with her daughter and her maid-of-all-work setting her house in order and preparing breakfast. It was to Isabel a delightful and stimulating lesson in life to see how her aunt, the courageous, vigorous-minded woman who had held her own with duchesses and female politicians in 'the gilded saloons of greatness,' shone with all the virtues of the house-mother in the little Lancashire home, and was evidently at peace with herself and with the world.

'Of such,' thought Isabel, 'must be the women who have made Englishmen great with their peculiar quality of greatness !'

And it was not at home only that her aunt was active and helpful ; she was also helpful and active in the village among her husband's people ; for Suffield was not one of those employers who consider that their responsibility for their workers is at an end with the payment of their weekly wages. There were particularly gaffers and gammers upon whom the cold of Death was gradually creeping while yet they lived, who needed such comfort and encouragement as a wise woman can best impart : cheering words, and comforting food and drink. Isabel knew these pensioners from of old, who had so long benefited by the Suffield bounty that they had come to think they had a prescriptive right to the care of 'th' mester,' as most people think they have a right to the regard of Providence. Isabel went among these ancient, quaint creatures, alone sometimes, and then she heard how her uncle and aunt were regarded by them.

'Aw'm real glad,' said one gray gaffer to her, who was ancient enough to wear knee-breeches and coarse stockings, 'th' missus ha' come back—though they do say as how it's because th' mester ha' lost lots o' brass. Brass or no brass, hoo [she] is a rare un to mak' broth.—I set on my lass and owd Betsy to try to mak' th' broth ; but, bless thee ! they connas mak' it nolow.—Aw reckon th' missus has a special kind o' barley.'

Of 'th' mester' she heard more sympathetic commendation still. She visited an old woman supposed to be dying, who had in her time worked very hard and borne a large family of great sons, and who had known 'th' mester's mother.

'Ay, aw knowed th' mester's mother,' said she to Isabel, while an attentive neighbour sat by—'as clean and nate a woman as could be, and as bonny and free-handed as th' mester himsen. When aw sit down i' th' Kingdom o' Heaven, aw'll ha' a good look round for th' mester's mother, to tell her how well th' mester's going on. Happen, aw'll clap e'en on her sitting right again' me ; for we're fro' th' same village.'

'Happen,' said her neighbour, almost as old and quaint a creature as herself—'happen thou'l give a look round and find out my owd John and tell him about Betsy.'

'Nay,' said the other ; 'aw'll do nought o' th' sort!—Trapesing round to look for thy owd John ! When aw get to th' Kingdom, aw'll just put me on a clean apron, and sit me down in th' first cheer, and rest me !—But aw'll look out for th' mester's mother !'

Thus work, peace, and contentment reigned in the Suffield home and throughout the village which Suffield had created and which depended on him. The only person who seemed at all sad and who occasionally sighed was Euphemia. And it presently became evident what was troubling her : not reduced circumstances, not the necessity of putting on an apron and performing the duties of a parlour-maid, but because her 'Beast' seemed to have ridden away, and because since she had not seen him her mind turned him into a Prince. When her father had to announce to Lord Clitheroe their contracted circumstances, she bravely—but with no terrible pang of heart—offered Clitheroe his liberty. He refused to accept it, although he anticipated that his father and mother would strongly object to his carrying out his engagement ; he declared, however, he would wait and 'lie low'—by which he meant 'bide his time'—until the not very distant day when his invalid old father must slip out of the title and estates. From that day, Phemy had not seen or heard from her 'Beast,' and she began to think he must have ridden away indeed. Then, since she had not seen him dancing attendance on her, she had begun to long for his presence, and at length to be convinced that she loved him and was going to lose him—such being the wayward fashion of love with maidens of Euphemia's character.

But on a certain day a tall horseman with a big flaming-red beard, and a piece of crape on his arm, rode up to the Suffield door and alighted. It was the 'Beast-Prince' come to claim his bride : his old father was dead, and he had stepped into the empty shoes and inherited the empty title, and by right of his freedom now to do as he pleased, he had come to his lady-love. Euphemia welcomed him with more demureness and at the same time with more fervour than she had ever before shown.

'Well, little one,' said he, 'you see I've come, now that I am free to do as I like.'

'I see you have come,' said she, with something of her old sauciness : 'you are a very noticeable fact ;' but she refrained from calling him 'Beast' or 'Goose.'

'Come now,' said he ; 'have you missed me at all ? Tell me.'

'A little,' she answered : 'not much.' But her look was better than her words.

They were closeted together for a little, and then they came forth radiant. The new Earl of Padigham congratulated Isabel on her approaching marriage—of which, he said, he had just heard—and regretted that his own could not be celebrated at the same time. And so he rode away, and left Phemy as merry as a bird in the waking of dawn.

So almost before Isabel was aware—with these events and with preparations for the wedding—her marriage day was at hand. It seemed to suddenly leap out of the future into the present ! Three days before it seemed still very distant ; two days before it seemed only one day nearer than it had been the day before ; then the gulf seemed to contract and disappear, and lo ! they were at the morning of the very day, and Ainsworth was by her side !

George was absent : he had gone for a holiday ; but he wrote a manly letter to Isabel, begging her

to believe that he stayed away from her wedding because of no feeling of estrangement, but only because he thought that his presence might embarrass the whole party. And with that he wished her and her husband—about to be—‘happiness and prosperity.’ The letter was simple and honest, and strove hard to be rid of all trace of self-pity or wounded vanity.

Suffield had declared a holiday at the works on the wedding day; and there was a great concourse in the church on that August morning, when the worthy man with tears in his eyes gave his niece away, and anon greeted her as ‘Mrs Ainsworth.’ But the most notable fact in connection with the wedding is that Mrs Suffield’s wedding present to her niece was that very box, containing Uncle Harry’s jewels and trinkets, which Isabel had turned over to her aunt not many weeks before.

And then—and then the married pair drove away into the new life which lay before them—the life of husband and wife, with its new cares and new burdens, its new duties and new responsibilities.

THE END.

OUTPOST DUTY AND ‘SECRET SERVICE’ IN WAR.

On the 19th of October, 1866, Lord Wolseley, by direction of the Commander-in-chief, issued a Memorandum to the general officers commanding military districts, in which it was pointed out that the Duke of Cambridge had recently noticed that ‘many officers of all ranks evinced a considerable lack of information in those field-duties, such as outpost and reconnaissance work, a thorough and practical knowledge of which is vitally important to all military efficiency.’ The Memorandum recalls that the yearly course of military training prescribed by the Queen’s regulations was laid down with the object of affording officers sufficient opportunities of practising these duties and teaching them to their men; and that the Commander-in-chief had been disappointed to find that little progress had been made in this respect. The general officers addressed were ordered to impress upon officers commanding regiments or battalions that the Commander-in-chief held them personally responsible for the efficiency of their corps in every particular. The necessity of devoting a great deal more time and attention to the instruction of troops, especially in field-duties—‘upon the proper and intelligent performance of which, in time of war, the credit of corps and the lives of men must in no small measure depend’—is very strongly insisted upon. Finally, the officers commanding the districts are requested themselves to see that corps under their command were frequently practised in outpost and reconnaissance duties.

The gravity of this severe rebuke will be understood when we consider the nature and duties of outposts. They act as the *feelers* of an army, it being their office to guard it from every danger, and keep it constantly informed of everything that can add to its safety or assist its move-

ments. It is their business to screen the movements of the army in their rear, and prevent any intelligence of its movements from reaching the enemy. The outposts thrown out to the front, to the flanks, and, when necessary, in the rear of a force in the field for its protection, are known in our service as ‘outlying pickets;’ whilst for reconnaissance duties we use patrols, varying in strength according to circumstances. All outposts should be as far in advance of the force they are thrown out from as they can be with safety; that is, without exposing them to be cut off or overpowered before assistance can reach them. A great military authority says that, ‘as a general rule, five-sixths of a force should be able to rest in peace and quiet, whilst to the remaining one-sixth is allotted the outpost work. It is essential that they should be sufficiently far to the front to enable the Commander-in-chief, when he receives the report from them that the enemy is advancing in force, to make up his mind whether he will or will not fight; and if he decides upon fighting, to enable him to occupy the position he had previously selected to fight in, before the enemy could disturb him in the movements necessary for that purpose.’

Ignorance of outpost duty was a distinguishing feature of our officers in the Crimean War. It accounts for the blindness and feebleness with which Lord Raglan groped his way forward towards Sebastopol after the battle of the Alma. It is now known that he might have marched into the practically unfortified northern side, in the September of 1854, instead of besieging it, at an immense cost of blood and treasure, from the south side during two long and trying winters. The greatest possible attention is given to the efficient performance of outpost duty in the armies of Germany, Austria, and France, every officer, whether of cavalry or infantry, being made to study General de Brack’s ‘Light Cavalry Outposts,’ which, although the work of one of Murat’s old officers, is still accounted the best authority on the subject.

The most reliable method of obtaining information of an enemy’s movements is by reconnaissances, which may be divided into four classes: (1) Reconnaissances in force, always conducted under or by order of the Commander-in-chief. (2) Those made by a detachment of all arms, of sufficient strength to protect themselves and secure their retreat. (3) Those made by staff officers, accompanied by small cavalry detachments; and (4) and last, those which are continually made by individual officers from the outposts.

One of the admirable light-cavalry officers of Napoleon, who distinguished himself in the third of these divisions, was Curyé—Sous-lieutenant in 1807, and General in 1813—whose name I have not succeeded in finding in any civil or military biography. In 1806, says De Brack, Curyé, ‘being twenty leagues in advance of the army, at the head of twenty of the French 7th Hussars, carried terror into Leipsic, where were three

thousand Prussians. In 1809, when fifteen leagues in front of the division to which he belonged, and at the head of one hundred chasseurs and hussars of the 7th and 9th, he passed unperceived through the Austro-Italian army, which he was engaged in reconnoitring, and penetrated to the centre of the staff of the Archduke, the Commander-in-chief. In 1812, at Solosk, at the head of one hundred chasseurs of the 20th, he carried off twenty-four guns from the enemy, and took prisoner the Commander-in-chief of the Russian army.' When services such as these can be rendered by a Sous-lieutenant of cavalry, the reader may understand the significance of the 'Memorandum' issued by Viscount Wolseley.

I think we may match Curély or any of the officers mentioned in General de Brack's work with the celebrated Colquhoun Grant of the Peninsular War. It was of Grant, as an 'exploring officer,' that Wellington said that 'no army in the world ever produced the like.' When Marmont came down on Beira in 1812, and was supposed to contemplate a *coup de main* against Ciudad Rodrigo, Wellington sent Grant to watch him. Attended by Leon, a Spanish peasant of fidelity and quickness of apprehension, who had been his companion on many occasions of the same nature, he arrived in the Salamanca district, passed the Tormes in the night, and remained in uniform—for he never assumed any disguise—three days in the midst of the French camp. He obtained exact information of Marmont's object, and more especially of his preparation of provisions and scaling-ladders, notes of which he sent to headquarters from hour to hour by Spanish agents. On the third night some peasants brought him a general order addressed to the French regiments, saying the notorious Grant being within the circle of their cantonments, the soldiers must use their utmost exertions to secure him, for which purpose also guards were placed in a circle round the army. Nothing daunted, he consulted with the peasants, and before daylight next morning entered the village of Huerta, close to a ford on the Tormes, and six miles from Salamanca. A battalion was in Huerta; and beyond the river, cavalry videttes were posted, two of which constantly patrolled backward and forward for the space of three hundred yards, meeting always at the ford. When day broke, the French assembled on their alarm post, and at that moment Grant was secretly brought opposite the ford, he and his horse being hidden by the gable of a house from the infantry, while the peasants standing on loose stones and spreading their large cloaks covered him from the cavalry. There he calmly waited until the videttes were separated to the full extent of their beat, when he dashed through the ford between them, and receiving their fire without damage, reached a wood, where the pursuit was baffled. Leon being in his native dress, met with no interruption, and soon rejoined him.

He had before this ascertained that means to storm Rodrigo were prepared, and the French officers openly talked of that operation; but to test that project, to ascertain Marmont's real force, and to discover if he was not really going by Perales to the Tagus, Grant now placed himself on a wooded hill near Tamames where the road branched off to Perales and to Rodrigo. There lying *perdue* until the French passed by in

march, he noted every battalion and gun; and finding all moved towards Rodrigo, he entered Tamames, and discovered they had left the greatest part of their scaling-ladders behind, thus showing the intention to storm was not real. This it was which allayed Wellington's fears for that fortress.

As a purveyor of intelligence, Colquhoun Grant was of more use to the British army in the Peninsula than all the cavalry officers under Sir Vincent Cotton, Lord Uxbridge, and Lord Edward Somerset put together. His unrivalled mastery of French and Spanish, both of which he spoke 'like a native,' enabled him to penetrate wherever he pleased. Scorning to wear any disguise, he would often spend days in the French camp wearing the British uniform, which his unsuspecting comrades supposed he had picked up on the battle-field and substituted for his own. His adventures were extraordinary; but it would be manifestly out of place to follow them in the present paper.

In the Austrian wars of Napoleon, the French bivouacs were sometimes visited by Jews, who asked leave to purchase the skins of animals slaughtered for the soldiers' food. These men were spies, a 'secret service' which renders invaluable assistance to the general in time of war. Wellington had numerous spies within the French lines, even at the headquarters of Marshal Victor. The greater number were Spanish gentlemen, alcaldes, and poor men who disdained rewards, disregarded danger, and were distinguished by their boldness, their talent, and their integrity.

But the spies I have especially in my 'mind's eye' were officers—English and French—of singular boldness and sagacity—such as John Grant, Major in the Portuguese service, often confounded by the French—especially by Marmont—with Colquhoun Grant, already alluded to. It is to be regretted that the adventures of this ill-requited officer, who was allowed by the English War Office to die in sordid poverty and neglect, were never preserved, for they must have been indeed extraordinary. Men of this sort carry their lives in their hand, for, by the laws of war among all civilised nations, a proved spy is summarily put to death.

As a fitting conclusion to this subject, I give the following on the authority of the late General Cavalié Mercer, Royal Artillery, 9th Brigade, at that time captain of a troop of horse artillery. It occurs in his 'Journal of the Waterloo Campaign': 'It was on the evening of the 15th of June (1815), and about sunset, or a little later, that an officer of hussars rode into the little village of Yseringen, Leathes [an officer of horse artillery] being at the time at dinner with me at our château. He was dressed as our hussars usually were when riding about the country—blue frock, scarlet waistcoat laced with gold, pantaloons, and forage-cap of the 7th hussars. He was mounted on a smart pony, with plain saddle and bridle; was without sword or sash, and carried a small whip—in short, his costume and appearance were correct in every particular. Moreover, he aped to the very life that "devil-may-care" nonchalant air so frequently characterising our young men of fashion. Seeing some of our gunners standing at the door of a house, he desired them to go for their officer, as

he wished to see him. They called the sergeant, who told him that the officer was not in the village. In an authoritative tone he then demanded how many men and horses were quartered there, whose troop they belonged to, where the remainder of the troop was quartered, and of what they consisted. When all these questions were answered, he told the sergeant that he had been sent by Lord Uxbridge to order accommodation to be provided for two hundred horses, and that ours must consequently be put up as close as possible. The sergeant replied that there was not room in the village for a single additional horse. "Oh, we'll soon see to that," said he, pointing to one of the men who stood by. "Do you go and tell the *maire* to come instantly to me." The *maire* came, and confirmed the sergeant's statement; upon which our friend, flying into a passion, commenced in excellent French to abuse the poor functionary like a pickpocket, threatening to send a whole regiment into the village; and then, after a little conversation with the sergeant, he mounted his pony and rode off just as Leathes returned to the village. Upon reporting the circumstance to the officer, the sergeant stated that he thought the man had appeared anxious to avoid him, having ridden off rather in a hurry when he appeared, which, together with a slight foreign accent, then for the first time excited a suspicion of his being a spy, which had not occurred to the sergeant before, as he knew there were several foreign officers in our hussars, and that the 10th was actually then commanded by one, Colonel Quentin. The suspicion was afterwards confirmed; for, upon inquiry, I found that no officer had been sent by Lord Uxbridge on any such mission. Our friend deserved to escape, for he was a bold and clever fellow.'

PHYLLIS MARDEN'S LOVE-POEM.

BY LOUIS HAMILTON.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

THE Marsdens had lived in the same house a long time, a very long time. About that there could be no dispute, seeing that three generations of Marsdens had been born and had died there. It was preposterous, the fourth Phyllis argued within herself, as she stood flattening her pretty nose against the window of her own sitting-room, on which the rain beat so thickly as almost to obscure the pleasant view of an old-fashioned garden below—it was nothing short of ridiculous folly to suppose that a house which was good enough for the Marsdens in 1780, when, as all the world knows, they first set up their great pottery in Stockwell, could be a suitable dwelling-place for that same family when a hundred years of prosperity had brought distinction to it in a dozen different ways.

It was roomy enough, of course! 'Bless me!' reflected Phyllis, with a shrug of impatience, 'that is not the drawback! There are half-a-dozen rooms, I daresay, that I have not entered since I was a child—damp, nasty, dusty places. If I had my way, I should pull down half the house; and cut all the living-rooms in two by building walls

across them. Then we might be comfortable. At least we should have one room, one climate; and not change torrid heat for Siberian winter every time we get up from our chairs to fetch a reel of cotton.'

She drummed on the glass with her fingers, and in a few minutes broke out again.

'There are Kate and Evelyn at the Deanery, as comfortable and jolly as possible, always going out to balls and tennis parties, and—and—things. And Georgie's life just makes me rampant when I think of it, with half her father's regiment always sending her flowers, and teasing her for dances, and making picnics. And here am I, the third family of cousins, with no brothers or sisters to cheer me up, left in this dreary place, without a single nice family in the neighbourhood.'

There were drops of water on both sides of the glass as Phyllis reached this point in her reflections, but she brushed them away defiantly. 'I don't care!' she said. 'I will be cheerful in spite of them all. I'll do something pleasant. What shall it be?'

She mused a little longer, and then turning away from the window, she began to pace up and down her spacious room.

'If I don't cease looking out of window, I shall be cross very soon,' she said fretfully. 'That constant splashing and dripping is enough to wear out any one's nerves. I don't suppose Papa minds it? Does he, I wonder? I'll go and see!'

The idea seemed to amuse her. She laughed a little laugh, patted her hair before the glass, and drawing herself up to the full height of her little figure, she walked with stately steps out of her room, and down the winding staircase, stopping with affected carelessness to look out of the tall window half-way down the flight. As she crossed the hall, she hesitated, and looked a trifle frightened; but recovered herself almost immediately, knocked at the door before her, and went in without waiting for an answer.

A man past middle life was sitting at a writing-table, littered all over with books and manuscripts. He looked up as Phyllis entered, and a frown was on his face. 'I did not say "Come in,"' he said sternly.

'Did you not?' rejoined Phyllis, with a fine air of surprise. 'Oh, how sorry I am! Well, but I could not suppose you would wish to be alone on such a miserable day.'

Then, finding no further rebuff forthcoming, she drew a stool near her father's chair, and rested her head against the arm.

'It really is weather in which people ought to stand by each other; don't you think so, daddy?' and Phyllis looked wistfully up at her father. 'For I couldn't bear to sit down comfortably in my pretty room up-stairs, and think that you were dull and worried by yourself down here. So I came to see how my daddy was getting on.'

Mr. Marsden moved uneasily in his chair. Above all things, he disliked being interrupted

in his work ; and probably on any other day he would have had no scruple in telling his daughter he wished to be alone. But to-day the ceaseless rain and dreary outlook had not been without its influence on his spirits ; and that, combined with the pleading look on Phyllis's face, made him answer almost amiably : 'Well, well ! perhaps it is !' And with a sigh he pushed aside a large pile of manuscripts that lay on the table before him.

'Why, daddy, you get busier every day !' said Phyllis, noting the movement. 'How I do envy you your writing on a day like this ! Let me see what you're doing.' She picked up a tattered, old, leather-bound book which lay at her father's elbow. The characters were strange to her ; and she knitted her pretty brows and pursed up her lips as she turned the book first one side up and then the other. 'What a queer old book, daddy ! And what funny writing—all curls and dashes and dots ! What language is it ?'

'Persian,' replied Mr Marsden, wheeling round his chair. 'That queer old book is exceedingly rare, and contains the love-poems of a writer whose name would tell you nothing if I repeated it.'

'That means that he has forgotten it,' observed Phyllis to herself. 'But love-poems, daddy—that really is interesting ! Are you going to translate them ?' And she patted the old book with quite a loving gesture.

'I am going to try,' replied Mr Marsden, modestly. 'Indeed, I have already finished several ; and as you seem tired of your own society, perhaps you would like to stay here a little, and I will read some to you. Possibly your observations on them may be of use to me.'

'Oh, yes ! I am sure they will !' exclaimed Phyllis. 'Because I know so much about such things.'

'Do you indeed ?' said her father sharply. 'Pray, how and where did you acquire this fund of information ?'

'Oh, well, not really, you know ! I didn't mean actually, of course,' explained Phyllis in a great hurry. 'Books you know, and stories, and things tell one such a lot.'

'Umph !' said her father, only half satisfied. Then he drew out his sheets of manuscript, turned to the light, and began to read, while Phyllis, with an air of demure propriety, seated herself on a stool before him.

'My beloved is fairer than the white rose of morning. Softer than the antelope's is her eye when she gazes on me. I rose in the night and stood beside her tower.'

'Oh !' cried Phyllis, with a little gasp of shocked astonishment.

Her father bent his brows at her, but went on reading. 'The night was cheered by stars, but in my heart is deepest blackness. Bitter are the waters of thy spring, oh Zoar-Azra ! They are sour and bitter in the mouth, and the heart rejects them. But affection spurned is sourer still ; and beside it Zoar-Azra is as honey mixed with sweet oil.'

'How *very* nasty !' murmured Phyllis, but her father did not hear her.

'Spurn me not ! oh daughter of the mountains !' he read, raising his voice as he came to the loftiest portion of the composition. 'Thou

whose voice is as the enchanting murmur of soft waters heard at evening amid the breath of roses, which light winds carry from the distant walks of winding gardens, heard in silence, broken by no footfall, nor the gentlest rustling of the softest leaf which buds in spring-time on the juniper tree, thou whose hair is—'

'Oh ! Ugh ! Augh !' yawned Phyllis. 'Papa, I beg your pardon. You know I do think your Persian love-songs disappointing. Poor girl, she would never have stayed to hear all that. Now, when you want to make love to a girl—'

'Thank you !' said Mr Marsden grimly, as he replaced his manuscript in a drawer and locked it up. 'I will not trouble you to tell me what I should do in that very improbable event.—Go away, Phyllis ; you are evidently not interested.'

'Indeed, I am afraid not !' sighed poor Phyllis. 'But oh ! I am so afraid I have vexed you ! Is there nothing more interesting in your funny old book ?'

'Nothing that would appear so to you.—Be good enough to leave me now ! Robins will let me know when lunch is ready.'

'Oh dear !' sighed Phyllis as she ran across the hall. 'How very hard it is to amuse people when they are old. And I did try so hard not to yawn. Poor daddy, I think he was rather hurt. Shall I come to that when I am old, I wonder ? Oh, I do hope not. But I must be very careful not to let the taste for Persian love-poems grow upon me.'

By this time Phyllis had reached her own room, and had thrown herself into a large deep chair beside her fire. 'Love-poems,' she mused—'love-poems are not necessarily Persian. English love-poems would be much nicer ! Not all about roses, and bitter springs, and winding walks. No, not at all ! Nice, sensible, straightforward love-poems, just like what a nice man would say ! But what would he say ? What should I say, if I were a man, and wanted to talk poetry ?'

She lay considering for some time ; and then, with a pencil and paper, endeavoured to write some of the nice love-songs she had imagined. But at first the words would not come ; and when they did come, they would not arrange themselves. So in a little while Phyllis threw her pencil down, went to her piano, and played waltzes, with a secret hope that the luscious harmonies might be heard in the study downstairs, and infuse a little warmth into the ancient Persian verses.

When the luncheon bell rang, she went down humming to herself one of the airs she had been playing, and took her seat opposite her father with a pretty unconsciousness of the frowns he cast towards her.

'Papa,' she said at length, having failed in several efforts to draw him into conversation, 'I think of going to see Kitty this afternoon'—then she added, hesitatingly—'if you do not particularly want me.'

'Mrs Huxtable !' said Mr Marsden, interested at once. 'Is her brother at home yet ?'

'No ; I think he is in Scotland. Shall I remind Kitty that you want to see him ?'

'Pray, do no such thing ! I presume my acquaintance is of as much value to him as his can be to me. If he comes to call upon me, I

can put him right about several theories he seems to have formed, and direct him to a course of inquiry which may be profitable to him when he returns to Persia. If he does not care to seek that advantage, that is his own affair.'

Phyllis made a mow, under the shelter of a decanter, but said no more. Only, when she rose to leave the room, she stopped by her father's chair and threw her arms round his neck. 'Don't be cross with me, daddy,' she said—'don't be cross with me. I can't help not being clever, you know; and I do love my old daddy, though I plague him so.'

'I'm not cross!' said Mr. Marsden, softening—that is, not very cross.—Well, well; not at all cross. There, get along, little plague! Leave me to finish my claret.'

'But I want you to show you're not cross,' said Phyllis, still hanging round his neck. 'Let me copy your poems out nicely for you. You know I can write a nice clear hand, much better than yours! Let me copy them. Ah! do—then I shall know I'm not in disgrace.'

'Foolish child!' said her father, pinching her cheek. 'You shall have the poems. But be very careful of them. If anything were to happen to them, nearly six months' work would be lost.'

'I'll take the greatest care possible! Oh! you dear old daddy.' And Phyllis ran off radiant.

Half an hour later, she was in a hansom, being whirled rapidly across the river to a quiet square in Kensington, where she was dropped on the steps of a roomy old house, which looked as if all its life it had sheltered dowagers of irreproachable family. The servant who let her in smiled as if he knew her; and Phyllis, nodding and smiling in return, ran lightly up the stairs.

As she laid her hand upon the drawing-room door she paused, for at that moment there issued from within the sound of a deep, man's voice raised in a kind of croon, which sounded inexplicably odd:

There was an old woman all skin and bone,
Such an old woman was never known.

These words the voice chanted, wofully out of tune; when the further adventures of the old woman were cut short by a much more youthful voice which interrupted, saying with decision: 'I don't like people all 'kin an' bone. Sing "Wing, wang, waddle oh!"'

'Pon my word, Dickie,' said the older voice, 'I'm afraid I don't know that song.'

Phyllis listened with a laughing face, turned as if to go, blushed, hesitated, and then suddenly opened the door and went in. She found a tall, fair-haired man sitting with a little boy astraddle on his knee, looking the picture of discomfort and embarrassment. A younger boy was sitting on the ground between his legs, nursing a green parrot, and causing no trouble to anybody, except when he tried to swallow it, or to wedge his head between the bars of the chair. The moment they saw Phyllis, they started off to meet her, and while the younger one clung to her skirts, the elder boy leapt straight at her, crying out: 'Oh! Auntie Phyllis, he can't sing one bit!'

'Sh! Dickie!' said Phyllis as she kissed him. 'You mustn't be rude.'

'Indeed, Miss Marsden, Dickie is quite right,'

said the young man.—'And permit me to say I am very glad to see you.'

'You look glad, certainly,' Phyllis admitted. 'May I ask where Kitty is, and why you are left in charge of these little people, who seem to be quite too much for you?'

'Too much indeed! I've never spent such an anxious afternoon in my life. The nurse is ill, or dead, or gone to the pantomime—I don't remember what exactly; and Kitty's gone to lie down with a headache. I believe she did it on purpose to see what I should do.'

'Very possible, I should say,' observed Phyllis. 'That corresponds also with my idea of Kitty's character. I should not wonder if you were right. And what did you do?'

But before this question could be answered, Dickie interposed. He had climbed on a chair, and jumped down to the ground ten times in succession; and being somewhat exhausted by this feat of agility, he came over to Phyllis, put his knees on her lap, and said in a pleading voice: 'Please, Auntie Phyllis, sing "Wing, wang, waddle oh!"'

'Not now, Dickie,' said Phyllis, trying to put him off. 'Another time, dear.'

'No, now!' pleaded the boy.

And Captain Benson, with an anxious face, added: 'Indeed, Miss Marsden, I think you had better, if you can, and don't mind very much; for Dickie will never be satisfied until you do.'

'But I am not going to stay! I am going home!'

'For mercy's sake, do no such thing!' cried her companion. 'If you are naturally cruel, remember that you may be in need of help yourself some day, and don't leave me in this emergency.'

'Upon my word!' said Phyllis, shrugging her shoulders, 'what helpless creatures men are!—Yes, Dickie, I'll sing to you, my birdie, as long as ever you like.'

So she sang:

Wing, wang, waddle oh!
Sing, sang, saddle oh!
Fly away, pretty boy!
Over the moon,

to the huge delight of the children, who laughed, and clapped their hands.

Then Dickie said, nodding over towards Captain Benson: 'You listen, and see how she does it!'

'All serene, Dickie,' was the reply; but Phyllis looked annoyed.

'Wouldn't you like to go and smoke, Captain Benson?' she asked.

'I want to learn the art of entertaining children,' he said. 'Pray, go on.'

So Phyllis sang another song, and then another; and then, espying a box of bricks in a far corner of the room, she led the children over there and set them to work to build a temple. Leaving them immersed in this labour, she returned towards the fireplace, and sank into the chair which Captain Benson set for her.

'I thought you were in Scotland still,' she observed, after a pause.

'I did go to one or two places after leaving Dunveth; but they were all very dull. I sup-

pose it was having such a jolly time there that made the other houses seem dull.'

'Perhaps,' Phyllis assented. Then she added: 'Alice Markham told me she had never in her life been so bored as she was at Dunveth.'

'How very strange! I thought it such a delightful time. Didn't you?'

Phyllis hesitated. Just at that moment there came a crash, a scream from the children, and the sound of breaking china.

'Goodness gracious me!' cried Phyllis.

'What on earth have the little wretches done!' exclaimed Captain Benson; and they hurried over to the scene of the wreck.

A FAITHFUL TRAITOR.

THE 25th of March 182- was marked by a thaw succeeding a severe frost of three weeks' duration. At Lenham Court, a mansion situated fifteen miles or so from London, on the west side, great inconvenience and some damage had been caused by the bursting of a water-pipe during the day. In especial, one room was rendered so damp that its usual occupant 'Spencer'—Lady Brown-Salter's lady's-maid—was compelled to change her sleeping-place. Instead of sharing one of the housemaids' beds, she chose, with her Ladyship's permission, to make up a bed for herself in the small room, or large cupboard, situated at the end of the corridor which runs through the whole breadth of Lenham Court on the first storey. It was a room used to store trunks and boxes in, and Spencer placed some of these as a foundation for her couch. Many of these trunks had made the voyage to India and back, for Colonel Sir William Brown-Salter had distinguished himself not a little in John Company's service. There had been much extra work for all the servants at Lenham Court that day, and it was late before Spencer retired to her cupboard.

On getting into her bed she found her novel conch by no means so comfortable as it looked. It had to be rearranged; but on extinguishing her candle a second time, she found herself as far from sleep as ever. While she twisted and turned, she heard the stable clock strike two; and immediately afterwards she became conscious of subdued sound outside her door. Remembering the jokes at her expense at the supper-table about the size of her bed-chamber, it occurred to Spencer that her fellow-servants might be going to play her a trick, or indulge in some practical joke. So she slid from her uneasy couch, and removing the key from the lock—she had locked herself in on coming to bed—she applied her eye to the keyhole. The door, as we have said, faced directly the whole length of the corridor; about two yards from her stood a man, but not one of her fellow-servants; he held a lighted candle in one hand, shading it with the other so as to cast the light now here, now there. His face was concealed by a mask of black crape, and he was listening intently. A breathless minute or two passed, and, as if by magic, there

were either two or three other men in the corridor, all masked in crape, behind which their eyes shone in the candle gleams. They went and came and consulted, noiseless as so many spectres. In and out of the rooms, locking doors softly behind them, now ascending to the third storey, now descending to the basement; now the one holding and shadowing the candle was left alone again.

Spencer drew back from the keyhole a moment, trying to think if there was anything she could do. Sir William's room gave on to the corridor—he must be murdered, thought poor Spencer, or surely she would have heard some sound, for he often sat late reading, and it was round his door that the thieves were clustered. He was a passionate man and a powerful, beloved by his servants for his bounty, though feared on account of his temper. Surely he would have made a fight for it, if he had not been taken at some cruel disadvantage. What could she do? The alarm-bell, even if she could muster courage to try and get to it, was quite at the other end of the house. Applying her eye once more to the keyhole, she was terrified to find not only darkness, but in the darkness, some one breathing close to the door. Then the handle brushed her cheek as it was softly turned, and lock and hinges were strained by the silent pressure brought to bear on them to such a degree that instinctively she drew back, expecting the door to be forced in upon her. The door creaked as the pressure relaxed, and just then the stable clock struck three.

As the minutes passed and silence was unbroken, Spencer gathered courage to look from her spying-place. The watchman stood alone, candle in hand, in his former place. She became stiff and cold at her post; nothing moved that she could hear or see, except that the man trimmed his candle now and then with his fingers, and turned his head watchfully from side to side, his eyes gleaming behind his mask, and seeming now and again to fix themselves on her lurking-place. At a low whistle from the basement, he and his light vanished together. Taking the precaution to stop up the keyhole, Spencer struck flint and steel till she obtained a light, then huddled on a few clothes, inserted the key, turned it, stood one minute outside, in silence and darkness, then snatching up her candle, made a rush for the only open door in the corridor—it was her master's.

Bound hand and foot to a chair, and gagged, was Sir William. The room was in the wildest confusion—boxes, caskets, chests, all turned upside down, and their contents scattered indiscriminately on the floor. Her Ladyship was in bed, bound and gagged too. With nimble fingers Spencer set to work to free her master. No sooner was this accomplished, than, speechless and foaming at the mouth, Sir William staggered out of the room, and, to her dismay, she heard him descend the stairs. Having released her mistress, the lady's-maid next hurried to the rooms of her fellow-servants, on all of whom the keys had been turned after they had been threatened with instant death if they uttered a sound. They were

soon released ; and the men-servants descended in a body to the ground-floor in search of their master. Here everything was in disorder. On the dining-room table were the remains of the thieves' supper ; but Sir William as well as the depredators had vanished. The groom returned from the stables with the news that his master's favourite hunter was missing. There was no doubt now that he had gone single-handed in pursuit of the thieves—as was indeed the case.

Concluding that they were from London and were returning thither, Sir William had saddled his hunter and started without an instant's delay, save to arm himself with a couple of pistols from the stand of arms in the hall. When he reached the head of the avenue, three-quarters of a mile from the house, he dismounted to open the heavy gates. Then he perceived, in the dawning light of the chill March morning, a strange dog sitting shivering inside the gates, unable either to surmount or pass under them. He concluded at once that the cur belonged to his late visitors, and that, having stayed behind, either for his supper or in search of game, his retreat had been cut off by the closing of the gates. He resolved to follow the clue thus given him, and was confirmed in his resolution when, the gates being opened, the animal scoured away, with his nose to the ground, in the direction of London. Away went the dog, and away galloped Sir William, keeping an eye upon him always. It was broad daylight when the three reached the outskirts of London, and Sir William was hailed by a voice he knew well. It was that of the Major of his late regiment.

'Hullo ! Colonel, where are you off to so early ?' Major Higgins was on his way home after a night's play at Brooks's.

'Turn your horse's head and I'll tell you,' returned Sir William through his set teeth. The idea of communicating his losses and the indiginity, he, an old soldier, had suffered, sufficed to make the blood, which his swift ride had kept at fever heat, boil again.

Major Higgins did as desired ; and putting his horse to the gallop, received, in as few words as possible, the news of the night's occurrences at Lenham Court, as he and his old Colonel made their way side by side through Oxford Street and the Strand, never once losing sight of the mongrel that was, he fancied, to be the clue to the recovery of his property. Dodging and winding his way among market carts and hackney-coaches, the dog, never once relaxing his speed, diverged into by-streets and lanes, until he disappeared up a court in Leather Lane.

Dismounting, and giving their horses in charge to a lad, and having impressed a watchman into their service, they advanced up the court in single file. Sir William led the way, a cocked pistol in either hand ; Major Higgins, who came next, was unarmed ; the watchman brought up the rear in a leisurely way, that showed him by no means thirsting for the fray. Doorway after doorway was examined, but the cur seemed literally to have vanished. In an angle of the *cul-de-sac* into which they had entered, Sir William at last discovered an outside wooden staircase. Despite the remonstrances of his companions, he persisted in creeping cautiously up the crazy stairs. There, curled up at a door, and apparently

fast asleep, lay the clue who had so faithfully but unconsciously guided him to his master's lair.

A summons to open the door met with no response. Sir William, to whom anger and excitement gave additional energy, put his knee to the door, and bidding Major Higgins 'Duck !' as he did so. The door yielded with a crash ; a shot passed over the lowered heads of the two officers, and took effect in the cocked-hat of the watchman. A short scuffle, and the thieves saved their lives by surrendering at discretion to Sir William's pistols. On a table in their midst was spread out the whole of the 'swag' ; not an article was missing. A presentation sword of Sir William's, the hilt of which was thickly crusted with gems, was the only part of the booty that had met with ill usage ; but every diamond, ruby, or emerald that had been knocked from its socket still lay on the worm-eaten table, and was, before many days were past, restored to its accustomed bed. A few bruises and dints in the metal-work of the hilt remained, and these Sir William would show with great glee in after-days, telling how the good sword was lost and won ; while, as to the dints and notches on the blade, gained in a more legitimate warfare, the good Colonel could scarce ever be got to speak a word.

G H O S T S.

WHEN the brilliant hues of the sunset fade
 Into amber and paly gold ;
When the wren and the robin sleep in the glade,
 And the shepherd shuts his fold ;
When the lamps are lit in the deep, blue skies,
 And the toil of the day is done—
Pale, haunting ghosts of the past arise
 From the shadows one by one.

The ghost of the words we did not say
 In the days for ever fled,
Comes out of the shadows dim and gray ;
 And the ghost of the words we said,
Of the cruel word, of the bitter word,
 Of the word of blame or scorn,
That was keen as the point of a warrior's sword
 On a fatal battle morn.

The ghosts of the woes of age and youth,
 That we passed unheeding by ;
Of the griefs we did not ask to soothe,
 Of the tears we did not dry ;
Of the ills of which we took no heed ;
 Of the grievous wrongs unfought—
Come with that of many a churlish deed,
 Or of good deed left unwrought.

They cluster round us, these phantom shades,
 These ghosts of the days of old,
As the cheerful glow of the daylight fades,
 In the twilight dim and cold ;
And in vain we moan, and in vain we weep,
 And we may not from them hide ;
Closer and closer these shadows creep
 In the twilights to our side.

M. ROCK.

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